



Drywall/Gypsum Disposal Information Sheet

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Are you planning on doing any projects that result in the disposal of drywall? If so, please carefully read this information sheet as it will help you protect yourself and your family.

For hundreds of years, builders have used asbestos as a miracle product that protected structures from fires and made materials stronger. When installed correctly and properly maintained, asbestos poses little risk to the public. Unfortunately, when disturbed or not maintained, asbestos fibers can be released into the air where they can be breathed into the respiration system. Depending upon the individual and the extent of exposure, this asbestos can cause serious health consequences.

One of the materials that was frequently enhanced by asbestos was the mud used in the installation of drywall. By 1990, this practice had stopped but a significant portion of the buildings on the North Island may have asbestos adhering to their drywall. Fortunately the amount of asbestos added to the mud was usually less than 5% making asbestos a very small portion of drywall waste but it still needs to be handled properly.

The following information provides guidance as to how North Islanders can determine whether they have asbestos in their building's drywall and if so, how to dispose of this waste properly and cost effectively.

Does Your Drywall Contain Asbestos?

Just because your building was built prior to 1990 does not mean that asbestos in the drywall is certain. Many builders were becoming aware of asbestos' safety risks and had moved away from it prior to a ban being implemented. Likewise buildings go through cycles of renovations and often the drywall being removed may have been installed long after the original construction. The Regional District of Mount Waddington (RDMW) has recognized three different ways that a property owner can validly claim that their drywall waste is asbestos free. Should a building owner be unable pass one of these tests, we have to assume that the drywall has asbestos adhered to it. These test are as follows:

1. Document proof that the building under consideration was constructed after 1990.
 - This can be confirmed at your municipal office's property records
2. The date written on the drywall indicating when it was made.
 - Usually the date of manufacture is printed on the back of the drywall.
 - When doing construction, try to retain a piece of the drywall you are installing as evidence that the material is new and does not predate 1990.
3. Letter or report from a Qualified Person vouching that a hazardous material inventory has been conducted and follow-up actions completed to secure any risks.

If you are having difficulties meeting any of the above conditions, please contact the RDMW office in Port McNeill and ask for the Operations Manager. Advice will be provided and possibly a site visit organized.

It should be noted that that a 4x8 sheet of drywall weighs approximately 25kg meaning the disposal cost would be approximately \$8.12 per sheet. For small loads, the cost of proving that drywall has no asbestos may be more effort than the cost benefit would justify.

Asbestos Can Not be Eliminated as a Possibility, What Now?

Fortunately the RDMW's 7 Mile Landfill and Recycling Center (7MLRC), located conveniently near the Port Alice junction, is an approved asbestos disposal facility provided the asbestos has been package properly. In some parts of Vancouver Island outside of the RDMW, property owners need to drive hundreds of kilometers to dispose of their asbestos waste.

When confronted with having to remove drywall that might contain asbestos, the property owner must first ask whether to get a contractor or remove the asbestos personally. The second option should not be undertaken without proper consideration. It is strongly advised that a Qualified Person be consulted prior to starting the project so that the safest procedure for the removal can be identified as well as getting proper safety equipment to protect those working on the project. A list of Qualified People is included at the end of the Information Sheet for your convenience.

As the material that might contain asbestos is being removed, it is necessary that it be stored in a proper manner to reduce the risk of fibers being released into the air. Asbestos waste needs to be doubled wrapped in film that has a minimum thickness of 6 mil. Others means of packaging will be accepted if they exceed this equivalence.

Homeowners and farmers who are generating of asbestos waste from their own property are allowed to dispose of the asbestos at 7MLRC without any documentation as long as the material is properly packaged. All other loads of asbestos waste that exceed 5 kg must fill out a BC Manifest form.

Once you have removed the drywall that might have asbestos and safely packaged it for transportation, you need to transport it to 7MLRC. If the weight of the drywall exceeds 100 kg, you must set up an appointment prior to bringing it to the landfill to make sure it can buried immediately as opposed setting it aside out in the open. Contact the RDMW office at (250) 956-3301 to get the Manager's approval for disposing of the asbestos. With this approval you will be given directions to contact the landfill's contractor who will set up a time for you to come to the landfill so that the asbestos can be dropped off for disposal. Once taken to 7MLRC, your asbestos concerns are over.

Still Uncertain?

If there is anything that you do not understand, please contact the RDMW Office in Port McNeill during regular business hours (8:30 to 16:30, Monday to Friday) and staff will assist you in getting proper answers or direct you to resources that can help get the job done safely and cost effectively.

Qualified People

Dry Island Restoration 250 956-3635

Waste Management Businesses

Fox Disposal

250 949-6306